

MEMORANDUM FOR CORRESPONDENTS

No. 123-M
May 19, 1994

Secretary of Defense William J. Perry will leave Washington on Monday, May 23 to visit NATO Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. He will return to Washington on Wednesday, May 25.

At NATO he will participate in the regularly scheduled ministerial meetings of the Defense Planning Committee, Nuclear Planning Group and the North Atlantic Cooperation Council.

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PRESS ADVISORY

No. 117-P
May 19, 1994

Following the regular Department of Defense Press Brief today, Thursday, May 19, at 1 p.m., there will be a background briefing by a Senior Defense Official on the Secretary's upcoming trip to NATO Headquarters in Brussels and the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium. The briefing will be held in the DOD Briefing Studio, Room 2E781 in the Pentagon. For additional information call (703) 697-5131.

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THE FEDERAL NEWS REUTERS TRANSCRIPT SERVICE

SPECIAL DEFENSE DEPARTMENT BACKGROUND BRIEFING

SUBJECT: SECRETARY PERRY'S TRIP TO BELGIUM

ATTRIBUTABLE TO A SENIOR DEFENSE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL

WASHINGTON, DC

THURSDAY, MAY 19, 1994

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: Kathleen asked me to give you a little background on the secretary's trip --

STAFF (?): Cameras off for the backgrounder, please. Thank you.

(Cross talk, laughter.)

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: I'll do this -- I'm ***** (name and title deleted). I'll do this in the way of a scene setter, really, just to give you a sense of how the trip will proceed and what we hope to get out of it, and I prefer not to be drawn into substantive discussions about these issues.

This will be Bill Perry's first trip to a NATO meeting as secretary of defense, and this is also the first one of these semi-annual DPC/NPG meetings. The Defense Planning Committee/Nuclear Planning Group meet every six months, but this is Bill Perry's first trip as secretary and the first time since the January NATO summit that these NATO ministers of defense have gotten together. So, it's significant for those two reasons.

In addition, as you all know, on the evening of the first night, that is, Tuesday the 24th, after we have compressed this Defense Planning Committee -- it usually takes one day and Nuclear Planning Group takes another day -- those will happen in one day on Tuesday. And that evening at 6:00 o'clock, Russian Minister of Defense Grachev will give a briefing to NATO ministers on Russian military doctrine. That's -- I don't to tell you, that's a presentation of great interest to the NATO ministers. And while we have had some signals about Russian military doctrine, it will be interesting, very interesting to see how Grachev makes this presentation, what issues he chooses to emphasize, and whether he is conciliatory or confrontational in his tone.

Q: Will that be open to press?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: It will not. But we, I'm sure, can make someone available right after that to --

Q: (Inaudible.)

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: Well, probably Ash Carter or Sherwood will do that.

Q: How long would that -- (off mike) -- that briefing, do you know, is there any time frame --

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: Well, dinner is scheduled at 8:00 o'clock, so -- and the briefing will begin at 6:00, so that's the boundary.

The next morning there will be a session with cooperation partners, that is, the old NACC group will reconvene, and we expect in that session if not the evening before, that Minister Grachev will address specifically the question of Partnership for Peace and Russian interest in that and views on what Russia would like in the way of some special protocol or understanding.

We are attempting to arrange an event Wednesday, late Wednesday afternoon, at the Partnership for Peace coordination cell down at Mons, Belgium, and the secretary is hopeful we can do that. It's simply a question of logistics, how many ministers at a rather late time can adjust their schedules to move from Brussels down there. But the secretary very much would like to have some special event for partners, Partnership for Peace signatories -- a tour of the building, a discussion of Partnership for Peace, and a reception down there. And we'll get word to you on whether -- I think -- certainly by tomorrow we will know whether we'll have that event or simply wrap up, have a press conference, and then come back to the states.

The DPC, the first of these meetings -- Defense Planning Committee -- has some regular NATO business. They'll address the question of force goals and how we stand as an alliance now in terms of readiness. In addition to that, we will look for a discussion in the restricted session on Bosnia. You all know that one of the unusual aspects of the conflict in Bosnia is a ground war that's run by the United Nations and an air regime that's run by NATO. This is required over the past several months a lot of negotiation and ensuring that the procedures work.

So I'm sure the ministers will want to address how that relationship is evolving, and the question of the credibility of NATO in enforcing these exclusion zones and other regimes will certainly be open to discussion.

In addition, we will look back at the NATO summit, and specifically the Partnership for Peace and the idea of combined joint task forces launched at that summit, and assess where we have come, how far we have come, since the summit and where we go from here. Do we need to make any adjustments or put more emphasis on one or the other of these -- or both enterprises?

In the nuclear planning group that afternoon, the United States has offered, and the allies are quite interested in hearing, a briefing on North Korea. We will also give them an update on our nuclear policy review in very general terms -- where we stand on this, what questions we're asking, and when we expect that process to be completed.

Minister Grachev will make his -- do his briefing, and I expect that some ministers, including our secretary of defense, will want to offer some comments on Grachev's presentation. Since we don't know what he's going to say except in the most general terms, we don't know what Secretary Perry or other ministers might want to say, but I can expect they're -- we know enough about Russian military doctrine that, if he follows what we know, some ministers will not want -- will want to put something on the table and not let Minister Grachev's statements go unanswered.

The next day, in this cooperation partners' session, we will be largely in receive mode there listening to these cooperation partners talk about their association with NATO. I expect we will hear a number of statements about the Partnership for Peace, what they hope to get out of it, the questions they may have about obligations, responsibilities, opportunities and privileges. And Secretary Perry may make a statement at that as well.

We will end the day with a press conference. For those of you who are traveling, you know this routine. Secretary General Woerner will have a press conference and Secretary Perry will follow. If we have the event down at Mons, about 50 miles from Brussels, we'll make some arrangement to get the press down there for coverage of that activity.

So that's the general dimension of the trip.

Q: Perry will be having his press conference in Brussels?

Q: Brussels, no matter what? I mean --

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: That's right.

Q: Good. Thank you.

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: 5:00 on Wednesday.

Q: At 5:00 on Wednesday? And then we'll fly down by helicopter, I guess, if they're going to have the event, right?

Q: You alluded to this special protocol or accommodation, or whatever phrase you used. What, if anything, can you illuminate to what Kathleen said in the on-the-record briefing about what NATO was prepared to offer Russia in that regard?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: You know what the Russians have said to us, which is that they like the Partnership for Peace, but they want in some way to have their Partnership for Peace distinguished from the partnerships of other states. NATO could say in response to that, no, every partnership is inherently unique and that's enough. We are exploring ways of going beyond that and recognizing that given Russia's strategic weight and interest in European affairs, given the relationship that Russia has with NATO states on some issues that other partners do not -- nuclear weapons, for example -- whether some recognition that there will be a regular dialogue with Russia, some sort of statement that would recognize that while each relationship is special, some relationships will require more attention than others. Whether we can craft some sort of statement like that and whether the Russians will find that an acceptable differentiation, that's what we're discussing right now.

Q: Would the dialogue be within the partnership or without it?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: It will be a dialogue of Russia with NATO, as indeed there would be dialogues with other states -- Albania, Tajikistan -- would each have those --

Q: But would it be within the partnership or not? Would it be part of the Partnership for Peace? Would it be a distinguishing element of Russia's membership in the partnership?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: No. Russia will not have any authority over other peace partners. It's important to make this point because I think many -- many people, including some peace partner -- those in peace partner states, may have a different

conception of this as a great gathering of states and a high table where some privileged elite sits in a position of greater responsibility than others. In fact, we should have called this Partnerships for Peace because it's -- instead of a large gathering here, it's a series of 16-plus-one really bilateral relationships, NATO to each one of these countries. So there will be very few occasions in which all of these peace partners gather. We hope to do that on Wednesday, but that's really a briefing for information. They will not meet as a group. Each one of these countries will have its own unique relationship with NATO. And no peace partner enters any obligation vis-a-vis peace partners because it has signed a peace partnership with NATO.

Q: Would it be correct to refer to this special protocol or whatever as more of a side agreement, a separate agreement?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: I wouldn't call it an agreement at all. As I said, this is still under discussion, and there were some inaccurate press reports out of Brussels yesterday when the subject was discussed among Perm Reps. What we're looking for is some sort of statement that would perhaps indicate the alliance's willingness to enter into regular consultations with Russia at regular intervals, something like that. But nothing in the way of a formal agreement. We're not interested in that.

Yes?

Q: If you did have such a statement and such a regular -- dialogue at regular intervals became (real ?), what would Russia's status then be to NATO? Would it be -- would one describe it as an auxiliary member? Is that going too far?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: We hope that they would be peace partners. But it's a recognition of a geostrategic fact that not all peace partners are equal in size, weight, capability, and it's certainly no slight on Albania. The Russians keep saying, you know, "We are not Albania." And I know that. You know, I have a map in my office, and I can see the difference between Albania and Russia. And it would not surprise Albanians or Americans or Russians that NATO would tend to spend more time in dialogue with Russia than it would with Albania if both were peace partners.

Q: But is this agreement that might be reached with Russia under the umbrella of the Partnership for Peace? Or is this something separate?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: As I said to Jamie, we're not looking for any sort of agreement, but rather a statement that would recognize that, given Russia's strategic interest in Europe, some regular dialogue is appropriate.

Q: Kathleen used the phrase, I think, "twin track" as though it's a separate initiative alongside and not part of the partnership. Is that right? Or is it a special relationship within the partnership?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: I'm not sure I understand the difference. Each peace partner is entitled to --

Q: (Off mike) -- perception by the other side yet, or in the partnership, full partnership? Is their concern that you have to overcome that?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: We are willing to acknowledge

that we expect, if Russia enters the Partnership for Peace, to be engaged with them in a regular dialogue. That's part of our partnership with Russia. If they propose that, we would find that something we would be quite happy to engage in. I don't see that as a separate track.

Q: (Off mike) -- the only difference is the frequency with which you dialogue with them. Is that right?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: And the number of issues on which we agree to have this regular dialogue.

Q: Pardon my ignorance, but could you define each partner and especially the policy of our government with regard to the peace partnership with Russia, what we seek? What are we after?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: Well, the Partnership for Peace is NATO's opening to the East. You get to be a peace partner when you sign the partnership framework declaration. We now have 14 --

STAFF: Eighteen.

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: Eighteen. I lose track here. Eighteen countries have signed these partnership agreements. So those are the peace partners of the NATO alliance.

Russia has not yet signed, but we are hopeful that they will be the 19th country to join this partnership.

Now, in addition to that multilateral relationship that NATO has with countries of Central, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the United States has a very active bilateral relationship with Russia. So not everything the United States -- not all Washington-Moscow interaction goes by way of Brussels. Partnership for Peace is very important, but it's also important for the United States to maintain a bilateral relationship with Russia.

We will have a bilateral exercise with Russia in July that will not -- that exercise -- be a PFP exercise. We maintain a regular dialogue with Russia on a bilateral basis that doesn't have to go through the Partnership for Peace. So there's no contradiction between these two, but in recognition of the special capabilities and interest of Russia, the United States puts great importance on its bilateral relationship with Moscow.

Q: Is there no private meeting between Perry and Grachev during the --

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: Yes, there will be. There will be. Or at least we have made a proposal to one, and we're waiting to hear back from --

Q: So you don't know when and the time frame and --

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: We hope for the morning, Wednesday morning, after the -- and if we can arrange that, I think we will have some press --

Q: (Off mike.)

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: Yeah.

Q: Is there any hope that the Russians would sign up next week, at the end of this meeting or during it?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: It's a question really of -- they can decide. If they would like to do that, we would be delighted.

I think the question is who is the appropriate person to do this.

There is a NAC/NACC meeting in Istanbul in early June, and the Russians may find it more appropriate for their foreign minister to -- with appropriate ceremony to sign the partnership agreement. I think we will know from Grachev what their timetable is next week. But we're not looking for them to sign the partnership next week and certainly not for him to do it.

Q: But you sound as though you're confident that they will.

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: Hopeful.

Q: Hopeful.

Q: When you first outlined the partnership, there were not only the opportunities, but also the responsibilities laid out of the transparency of budgets and that sort of thing. Has there been any problems with the Russians in terms of being open, in terms of cooperating in those areas? Or have you no indication yet at all from them? Is this what you're going to get out of Grachev at this --

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: That's what we look for. Each peace partner signs this declaration which commits it to certain principles. Most of the principles follow the CSCE guidelines. The next step is a framework declaration in which we invite every one of these states to indicate to the alliance what it will do to encourage transparency of defense budget and policymaking, to increase civilianization of defense ministries. There's no obligation that they do that. Some states will be -- because they would like very much to be members of the alliance, will have an incentive themselves to demonstrate progress in that direction. But there's certainly no obligation -- we're not going to kick anybody out of the partnership because they failed to meet goals. This is really a self-pacing process.

Q: Realizing this is a really out-of-area problem, do you expect anything in the final communique on North Korea? I mean, the United States press NATO to make some kind of statement on North Korea?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: We will have this briefing in the nuclear planning group, but this is a for-information-only. Obviously, as you all are interested in this, many of our NATO allies are keenly interested in this potential flashpoint in international relations. But it is not a NATO issue, and I don't think we'll see anything in the NATO communique on this.

Q: No, but the United States, South Korea, Japan have spoken out increasingly on this issue, and -- as has Britain, but other NATO countries have not made public statements about North Korea.

I'm wondering if he would press some kind of statement in the communique on expressing NATO concern over the North Korean situation. You don't see it?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: Well, it's an alliance. There are 16 states, and they can write -- you'll recall at the NATO summit there was communique-drafting going on until the last minute. But I -- we do not expect that -- we are not going to Brussels to look for an alliance statement on North Korea.

Q: Do you expect anything on Bosnia, particularly the differences that have emerged with the U.N. in terms of the close

air support and that sort of thing?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: I expect there will be some statement in the communique on Bosnia.

Q: Speaking of NATO and Bosnia, once again the question I asked Kathleen, is there any evidence that we've ruffled the feathers of the Russians by the NATO bombing in Bosnia that might impede them becoming peace partners?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: They have made clear that they would -- they have not been happy with some NATO decisions in the past. We have -- Secretary Perry makes a point of communicating with Minister Grachev and we have a very regular dialogue with the Russians on Bosnia. I think the consequence of that has been a greater appreciation on both sides of interest and the process ahead here.

One consequence -- I don't want to put too much on the Perry-Grachev, but certainly Secretary Christopher and Kozyrev are doing the same and even the president and -- President Clinton and President Yeltsin. The consequence of all of that has been a narrowing of the difference on the ground situation, and as we saw last week in this contact group, consensus among the United States, the European Union and Russia on how the negotiating track should proceed. So, it is certainly true that there have been ruffled feathers in the past, but they're being smoothed out, they're not being more ruffled over the past weeks. And we're very pleased and encouraged by the coincidence of interest among these three parties in the contact group now.

Q: Can Russia and NATO have these frequent discussions and consultations without Russia signing the Partnership for Peace document?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: Minister Grachev has been, as ***** noted, this will be his, what, third trip to -- so he has been -- he is the defense minister of a country that is in NACC, NACC continues, and I suppose there is the possibility that if Grachev wanted to come as a non-peace partner defense minister there would be some interest in hearing him, but it would be on an ad hoc basis. Certainly the Partnership for Peace offers some legitimacy and regularity to that kind of dialogue, and it's another reason why we hope the Russians will sign.

Q: This statement that you're working on, if it could be agreed on, I want to be clear on who it would be coming from. It would be a NATO statement --

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: Yes.

Q: -- or it would be a United States --

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: A NATO statement.

Q: NATO statement.

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: Yes.

Q: Since this is your area of the world, could you just give us your assessment of where we're headed in Bosnia, what next or -- is -- does it look like there might be a peace agreement that's going to stand up? Does it look we're in some sort of a stand-off? Are there build-up of forces somewhere that looks dangerous? And what about this development of the French, saying that they want to take some of their troops out?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: Jimmy, I'm just going to stick

with the trip planning here, yeah I think I will.

Q: They're going to talk about this on the trip, aren't they?
I think you said --

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: I'll check. You know --

Q: All right.

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: (Inaudible) -- chance to talk.

Q: All right.

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: I'll tell them that you --

Q: What sort of posture -- knowing what you know about
Russian defense policy at the moment, what sort of posture are
you expecting to Grachev strike? Confrontational or
accommodating?

SR. DEFENSE DEPT. OFFICIAL: To be determined.

Q: Thanks.

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